

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 019754

EXDIS - FOR AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-L

TAGS: RH, UK, PDEV

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: APPROACH TO GON

REF: A. STATE 17728, B. LAGOS 1010, C. DAR ES SALAAM 314

1. BY SEPARATE CABLE WE HAVE ASKED EMBASSIES LUSAKA, GABORONE, AND MAPUTO TO MAKE SAME POINTS ON RHODESIA TO HOST GOVERNMENTS WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN EXPRESSED TO TANZANIAN FONMIN MKAPA.

2. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES YOU SHOULD APPROACH OBASANJO
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OR OTHER APPROPRIATE HIGH RANKING GON OFFICIAL PRIOR TO NIGERIAN MEETINGS WITH NKOMO AND MUGABE AND MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS, IN ADDITION TO USING THE APPROPRIATE ONES FROM REFTEL A. IN DEVISING THESE POINTS WE HAVE CONSCIENTOUSLY ATTEMPTED TO BE TOTALLY FRANK WITH THE NIGERIAN;.

3. POINTS TO BE MADE

A. FONMIN OWEN HAS SHARED WITH US HIS CONVERSATION WITH GARBA IN LONDON. WE HOPE THAT MEETING SERVED TO REINFORCE YOUR CONFIDENCE IN THE LEVEL OF BRITISH COMMITMENT TO THE PURSUIT OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS AND THE GREAT IMPORTANCE WHICH THEY AND WE ATTACH TO THE MALTA TALKS.

B. IT IS NOT TOO MUCH TO SAY THAT MALTA MAY BE THE LAST CHANCE FOR THE ANGLO-AMERICAN SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS. THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT TALKS SEEM TO BE MAKING SOME HEADWAY, AND, IF AGREEMENT IS REACHED, DOMESTIC PRESSURES IN THE U.S. AND U.K. WILL INCREASE DRAMATICALLY TO ACCEPT THOSE TALKS.

C. WE HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT WE DO NOT SUPPORT AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT -- THAT WE BELIEVE IT WILL NOT BRING AN ENDURING AND PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO RHODESIA'S PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, OUR ABILITY TO WITHSTAND DOMESTIC PRESSURE WILL BE SEVERELY LIMITED IF WE CANNOT AT LEAST DEMONSTRATE PF SUPPORT FOR THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS. WE WILL LOGICALLY BE ASKED WHO SUPPORTS THE PLAN IF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT DOES NOT AND SMITH, SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA ARE GOING THEIR OWN WAY.

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D. IF MALTA PRODUCES NO POSITIVE RESULTS, THE CHANCES FOR AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT RECEDE. THE WAR MAY WELL EXPAND WITH THE ATTENDANT HUMAN SUFFERING FOR THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE AND THE SURROUNDING COUNTRIES. THE POSSIBILITY OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION CANNOT BE DISCOUNTED. A WIDENING CONFLAGRATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AT THIS TIME WILL NOT SERVE THE GOAL OF A LIBERATED AFRICA.

E. WITHOUT PF SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSALS WE WILL BE UNABLE TO APPROACH THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND URGE THEM TO APPLY THE NECESSARY PRESSURE ON RHODESIA. THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE GENUINELY RESISTANT TO PRESSURING SMITH UNLESS WE CAN DEMONSTRATE TO THEM THAT THE RESULT OF SUCH ACTION WOULD BE A SENSIBLE AND COMPREHENSIVE TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE AS ENVISAGED IN THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS. WE CANNOT DO THAT WITHOUT PF SUPPORT.

F. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IS DESIROUS OF OBTAINING POLITICAL POWER FOR ITSELF IN AN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE. WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT THEY WILL

EMERGE VICTORIOUS FROM AN ELECTORAL PROCESS, BUT WE CAN, THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR PROPOSALS, GAURANTEE THAT THEY WILL HAVE A FAIR OPPORTUNITY TO COMPETE WITH OTHERS. THIS IS ALL THEY CAN JUSTIFIABLY DEMAND FROM A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WHICH MUST SERVE THE NEEDS OF ALL ZIMBABWEANS AND NOT ONE PARTICULAR GROUP.

G. TO DATE THE PF HAS RESISTED ATTEMPTS TO ENTER INTO SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS ON THE TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS. WHILE NOT REJECTING THETOTALITY OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS, THE FRONT HAS REFUSED TO ACCEPT CERTAIN CENTRAL ELEMENTS, SUCH AS THE POWERS OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER AND THE FUNCTION OF THE UN FORCE, WHICH CONFIDENTIAL

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ARE CENTRAL TO THE PLAN'S SUCCESS. MALTA MUST SEE A CHANGE IN THE PF'S APPROACH.

H. WE HOPE THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WILL APPROACH MALTA WITH THE SAME SENSE OF COMPROMISE AND URGENCY WITH WHICH WE AND THE BRITISH HOLD. VANCE

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